

Categorical Exclusion Determination and Decision Record
for brush and hardwood cutting and girdling, and hardwood clump control,
Butte Falls Resource Area
OR115-08-25

Description of Proposed Action

This action would occur within the Butte Falls Resource Area of the Medford District BLM (Bureau of Land Management) in fiscal years 2008 and 2009. The proposed activities would occur on lands allocated as Late-Successional Reserves (LSR) as described in the Medford District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan, June 1995.

The objectives of the proposed treatments are to maintain native conifer survival and vigor, and to maintain a native hardwood component in the treatment areas by releasing existing conifers and hardwoods from competition for moisture, nutrients, light, and growing space. This would be accomplished by cutting the competing vegetation (shrubs, hardwood sprouts) and leaving the residual trees for increased growth.

In the areas to be treated, the proposed action would cut brush and hardwoods 6 inches in diameter at breast height (DBH) and less, and girdle hardwoods 6.1 to 11.9 inches DBH, retaining up to 2 hardwood stems, if present, within 6 feet of existing conifer trees. Hardwoods 12 inches DBH and greater would be reserved along with all conifers. In all units, severed brush and hardwoods would be cut and scattered to a depth of less than 3 feet.

Approximately 600 acres are planned for treatment in the Timbered Rock fire area with this Categorical Exclusion.

All treatments would occur in the Elk Creek Watershed, Butte Falls Resource Area, Medford District BLM, Jackson County. See attached maps for exact locations of project units

Plan Conformance Review

The Bureau of Land Management did not scope this proposal and the public was not involved in its development. This proposal is consistent with policy directed by the following:

- *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (Northwest Forest Plan FSEIS, 1994 and ROD, 1994);
- *Final-Medford District Proposed Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision* (EIS, 1994 and RMP/ROD, 1995);
- *Record of Decision To Remove the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines from the Bureau of Land Management Resource Management Plans Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* (USDI 2007); and
- *Medford District Integrated Weed Management Plan Environmental Assessment* (1998) and tiered to the *Final-Northwest Area Noxious Weed Control Program Environmental Impact Statement* (EIS, 1985).

The proposed action is in conformance with the direction given for the management of public lands in the Medford District by the Oregon and California Lands Act of 1937, Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, Endangered Species Act of 1973, Clean Water Act of 1987, Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 (as amended 1986 and 1996), Clean Air Act of 1990 (as amended), and Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979.

This proposal is consistent with management direction in the Medford District Resource Management Plan that directs the BLM to conduct silvicultural activities according to management actions and directions summarized in Appendix E, Silvicultural Systems, for Matrix and Late Successional Reserves (Medford District Record of Decision USDI 1995, p. 33, 39, 183-185, 195).

Project Design Features

1. All conifers and hardwoods 12" DBH and greater would be reserved in all units.
2. In all units, brush and hardwoods 6" DBH and less would be cut. Hardwoods between 6" and 11.9" DBH would be girdled for a 6-foot radius from the conifer bole around the reserved conifer, except that 1 stem from each hardwood clump would be retained with no more than 2 stems retained within the 6-foot radius.
3. Within riparian reserves, conifers, brush, and hardwoods would be treated along intermittent streams and a no-cut buffer would extend 50' on both sides of all perennial and fish-bearing streams. No big leaf maple, Oregon ash, or red alder would be cut.
4. Units would be surveyed for BLM Special Status plants prior to treatment. If plants are found within treatment units, appropriate species-by-species protective measures would be implemented to accommodate those plants.
5. There would be no activity within 0.25 miles of northern spotted owl nest sites from March 1 through June 30 of a given year, unless instructed differently by the resource area wildlife biologist. This may be extended up to September 30 if nesting activity is occurring at that time.
6. No overnight camping will be allowed at the site or in the surrounding area.
7. All trash and garbage would be picked up and disposed of properly.

Categorical Exclusion Determination

This proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion as provided in United States Department of the Interior Departmental Manual 516 DM 11. 9, (C)(4) which allows for "Precommercial thinning and brush control using small mechanical devices" (release 5/27/04).

Before any action described in the list of categorical exclusions may be used, the "extraordinary circumstances," included in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2, must be reviewed for applicability. After review, the BLM determined no extraordinary circumstances exist that would cause the proposed action to have a significant environmental effect. The action will not require additional analysis.

Contact Person

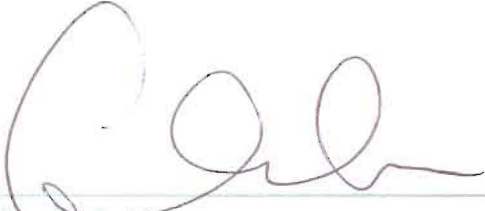
For additional information concerning this project, contact Doug Stewart, Project Leader, at (541) 618-2264.

Decision

It is my decision to implement the brush and hardwood cutting and girdling, and hardwood clump control project as described in the Proposed Action and as shown on the attached project maps, in fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

Decision Rationale

The proposed action has been reviewed by Butte Falls Resource Area staff and appropriate Project Design Features, as specified above, will be incorporated into the proposal. Based on the attached NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) Categorical Exclusion Review, I have determined the proposed action involves no significant impact to the human environment and no further environmental analysis is required.


Christopher J. McAlear
Field Manager
Butte Falls Resource Area

May 07, 2008
Date

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

Notice of the forest management decision to be made on the action described in this categorical exclusion will be posted on the Medford District internet website. The action is subject to protest under 43 CFR 4.450-2. A decision in response to a protest is subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals under 43 CFR part 4.

NEPA Categorical Exclusion Review**Proposed Action:**

This action would release existing conifers and selected hardwood sprouts from competition for moisture, nutrients, light, and growing space, by cutting brush and hardwood sprouts within a 6 foot radius of conifer seedlings.

Department of the Interior Manual 516 2.3.A(3) provides for a review of the following criteria for categorical exclusion to determine if exceptions apply to the proposed action based on actions which may:

1. *Have significant impacts on public health or safety.*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial RW Remarks:

2. *Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resource; park, recreation, or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial RW Remarks:

3. *Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial JS Remarks:

4. *Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial JS Remarks:

5. *Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial JS Remarks:

6. *Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial JS Remarks:

7. *Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial JCM Remarks:

8. *Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.*

Plants ☐ Yes ☒ No Initial MW Remarks:

Animals ☐ Yes ☒ No Initial YH Remarks:

Fish ☐ Yes ☒ No Initial JS Remarks:

9. *Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial JCM Remarks:

10. *Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial RW Remarks:

11. *Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial Jam Remarks:

12. *Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or nonnative invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).*

☐ Yes ☒ No

Initial mw Remarks:

Reviewers:

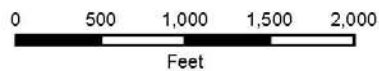
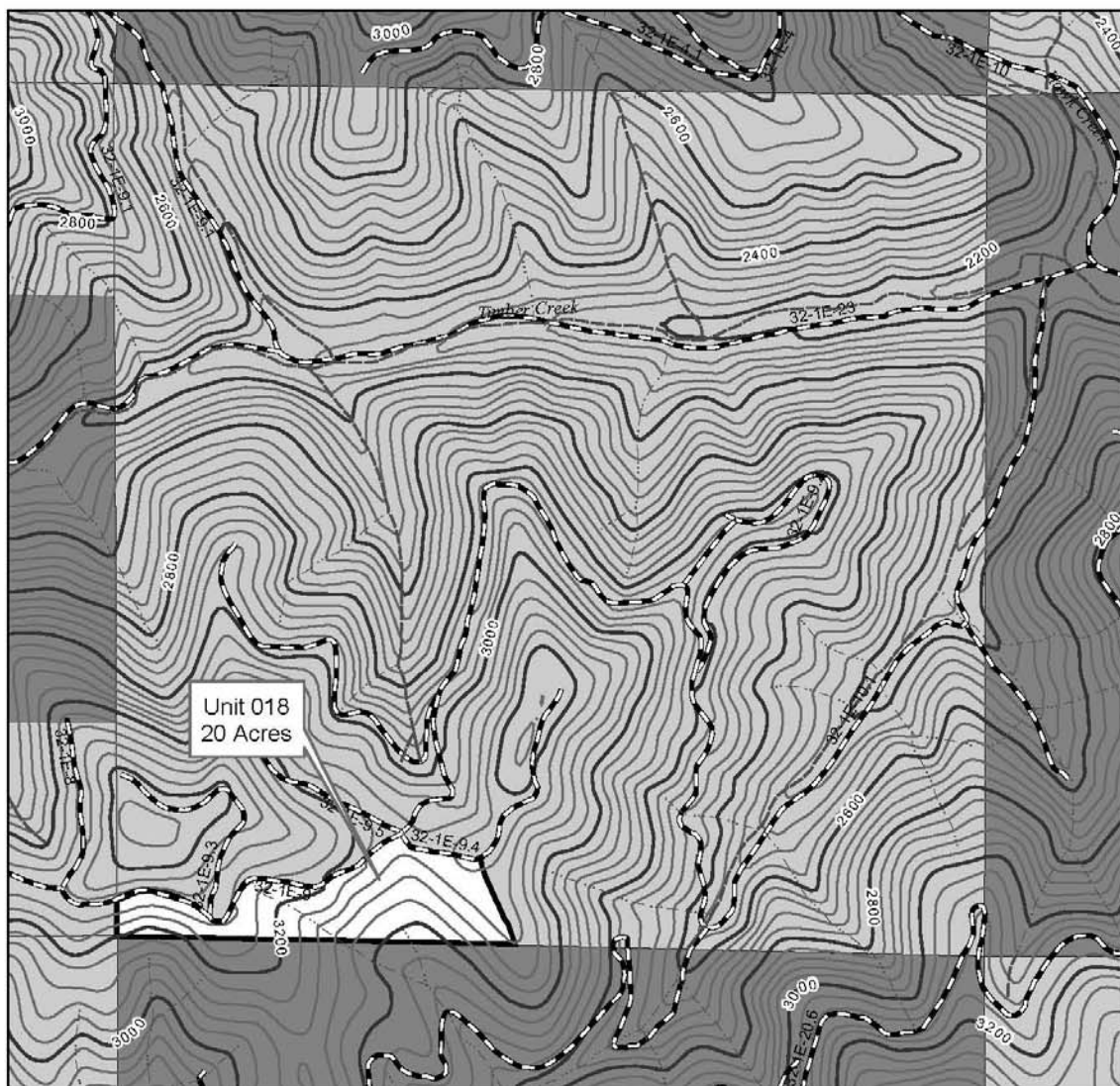
Name	Title	Date	Initials
Williams/Wicks	NEPA Coordinator	5/6/08	RW
Marcia Wineteer	Botanist	5/5/08	mw
Linda Hale	Wildlife Biologist	5/6/08	LH
Steve Liebhardt	Fisheries Biologist	5-6-8	DS Lee SL
Shawn Simpson	Hydrologist	5/5/08	SLS
Ken Van Etten	Soil Scientist	5/5/08	KBV
Leanne Mruzik	Fire/Fuels Specialist	5-5-08	Am
John McNeel	Cultural Technician	5-6-08	Jam
Randy Bryan	Engineer	5-5-08	RRB
Trish Lindaman	Outdoor Recreation Planner	5/4/08	RTL

FY08 First Task Order List for Brush and Hardwood Cutting and Hardwood Clump Control (4-28-08)

Location	Unit Number	FOI Key Number	Unit Name	Acres	Treatment	Bid Item	Comments	Botany Surveys
T32S, R1E, sec 9	018	162245	Timbered Rock	20	BR and HC	1-O		Yes-07
T32S, R1E, sec 11	11-1	160299	Timbered Rock	51	BR and HC	1-O	In 07 CE	Yes-07 plant site
T32S, R1E, sec 19	013	162570	Timbered Rock	21	BR and HC	1-O		Yes-07
T32S, R1E, sec 19	19-13	165042	Timbered Rock	15	BR and HC	1-O	In 07 CE	Yes-07
T32S, R1E, sec 29	29-6A	160364, 162576, 163808	Timbered Rock	129	BR and HC	1-O		Yes-07
T32S, R1E, sec 29	29-6B	160366, 160362, 160368	Timbered Rock	113	BR and HC	1-O		Yes-07
T32S, R1E, sec 30	001	162283	Timbered Rock	44	BR and HC	1-O		Yes-07
T32S, R1W, sec 25	25-8	161726	Timbered Rock	80	BR and HC	1-O	Flag Out Research Stations	Yes-07
T32S, R1W, sec 25	25-12	161724	Timbered Rock	36	BR and HC	1-O		Yes-07
Total Acres				509				
NOTE: FOI=Forest Operations Inventory; BR and HC=Brush and Hardwood Clump Control								

Timbered Rock Fire

T32S R1E Sec 9



1:12,000



FOI Key	Unit #	Acres	Bid Item	Treatment
162245	018	20	1-O	Brush + Hdwd Clmp Ctrl

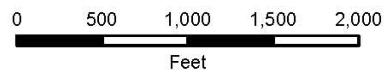
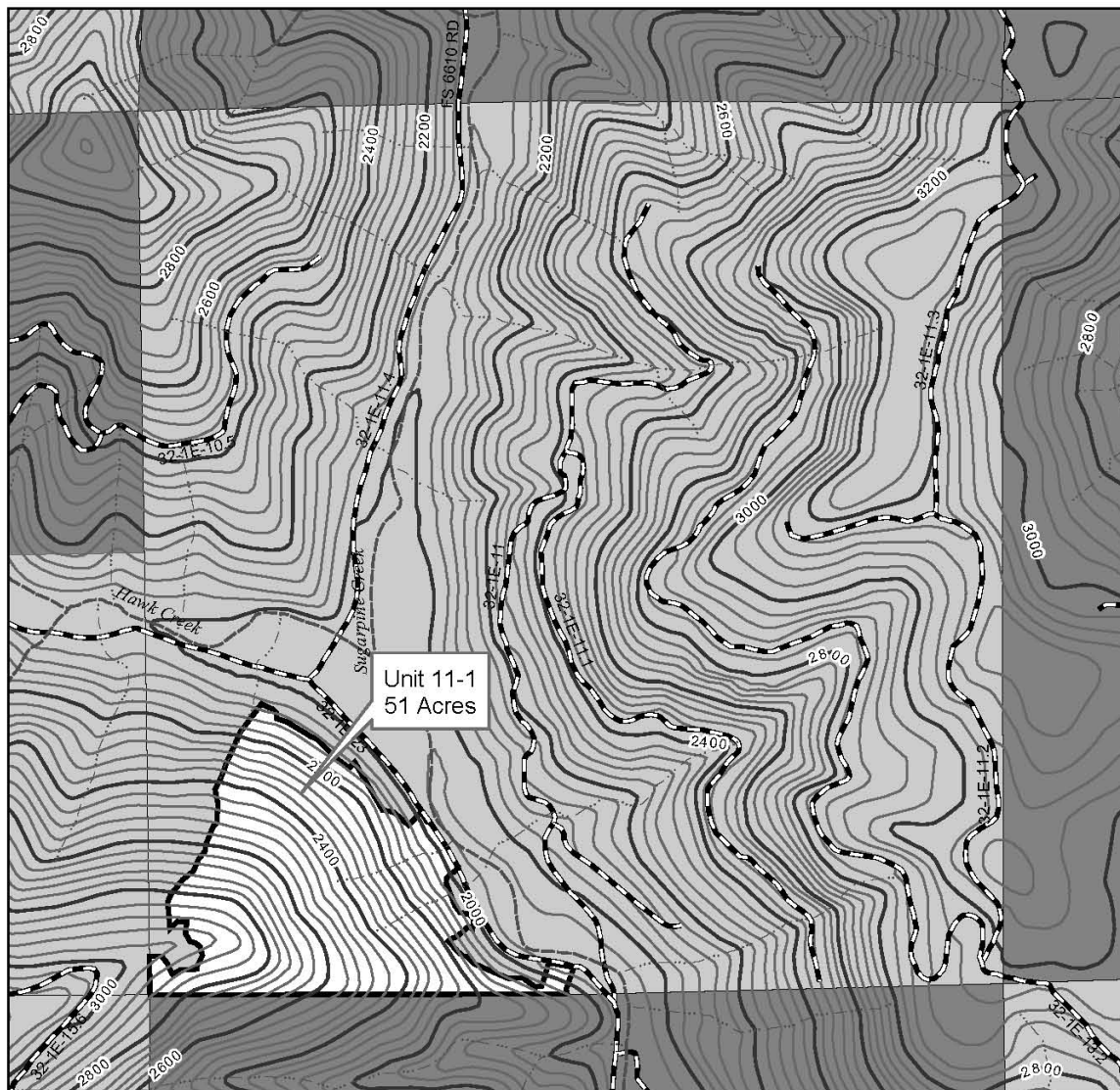


U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management
MEDFORD DISTRICT
Butte Falls RA
April 2008



Timbered Rock Fire

T32S R1E Sec 11



1:12,000



FOI Key	Unit #	Acres	Bid Item	Treatment
160299	11-1	51	1-0	Brush + Hdwd Clmp Ctrl

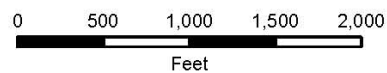
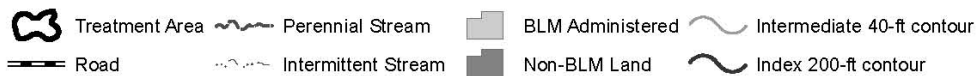
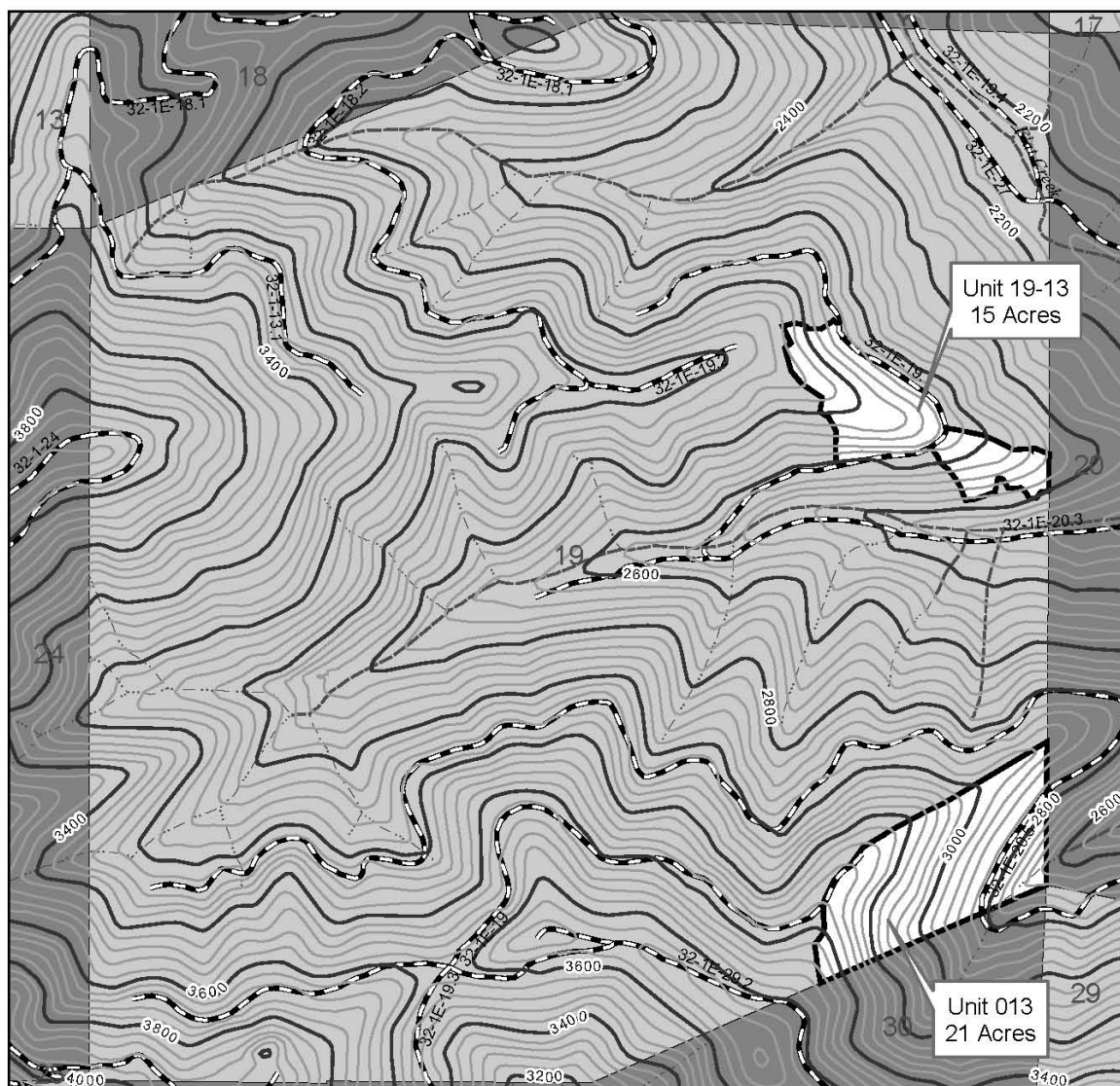


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MEDFORD DISTRICT
Butte Falls RA
April 2008



Timbered Rock Fire

T32S R1E Sec 19



1:12,000



FOI Key	Unit #	Acres	Bid Item	Treatment
165042	19-13	15	1-O	Brush + Hdwd Clmp Ctrl
162570	013	21	1-O	Brush + Hdwd Clmp Ctrl
	Total	36		

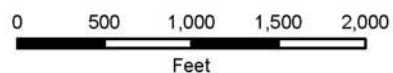
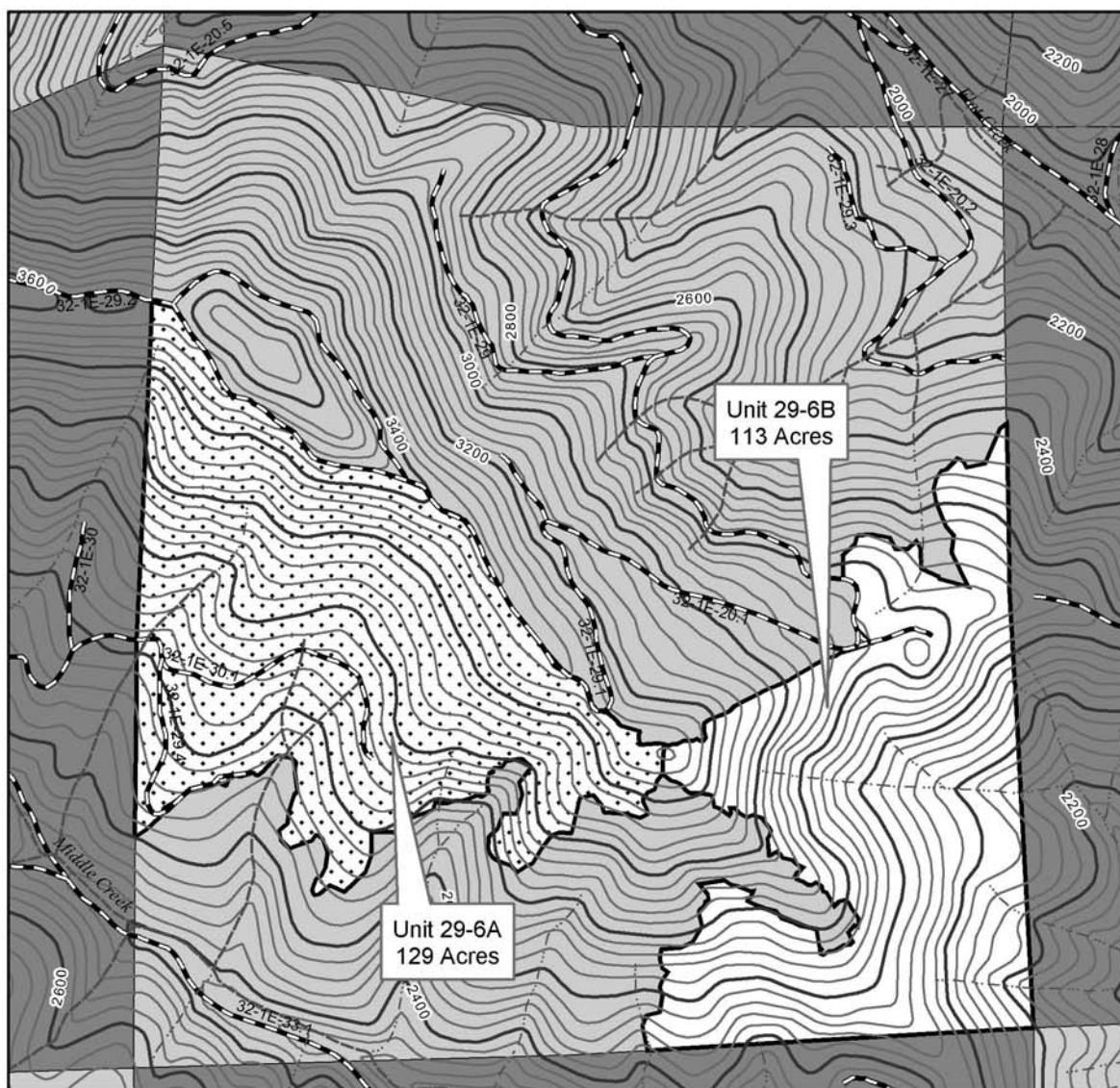


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MEDFORD DISTRICT
Butte Falls RA
January 2008



Timbered Rock Fire

T32S R1E Sec 29



1:12,000



FOI Key	Unit #	Acres	Bid Item	Treatment
160364	29-6A	129	1-O	Brush + Hdwd Clmp Ctrl
160366	29-6B	113	1-O	Brush + Hdwd Clmp Ctrl
	Total	242		

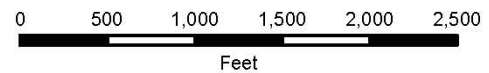
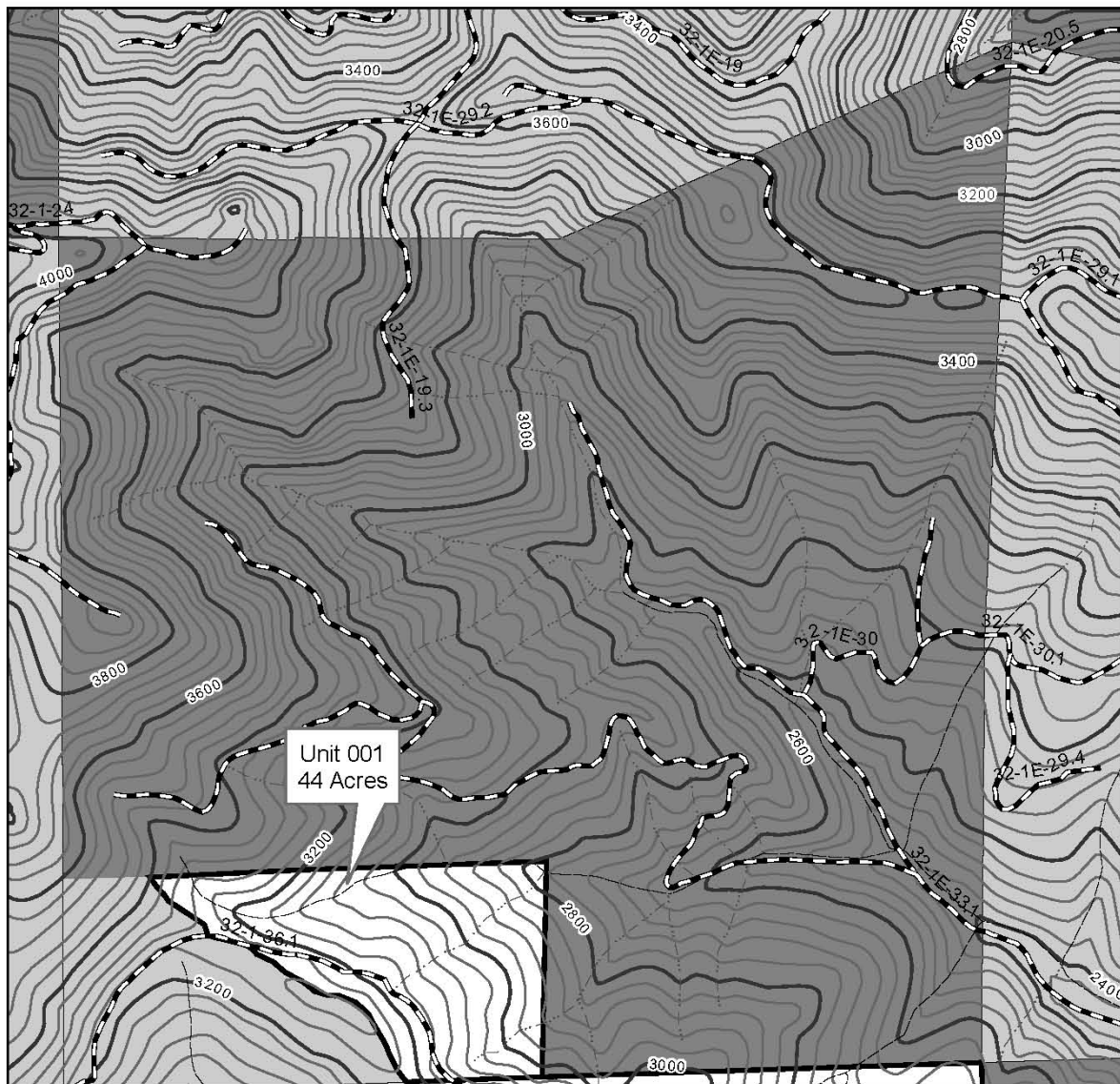


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MEDFORD DISTRICT
Butte Falls RA
April 2008



Timbered Rock Fire

T32S R1E Sec 30



1:12,000



FOI Key #	Unit #	Acres	Bid Item	Treatment
162283	001	44	1-O	Brush + Hdwd Clmp Ctrl
	Total	44		

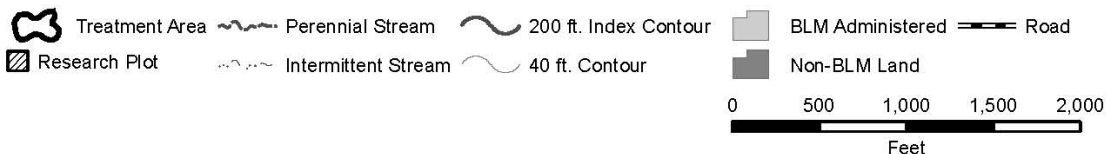
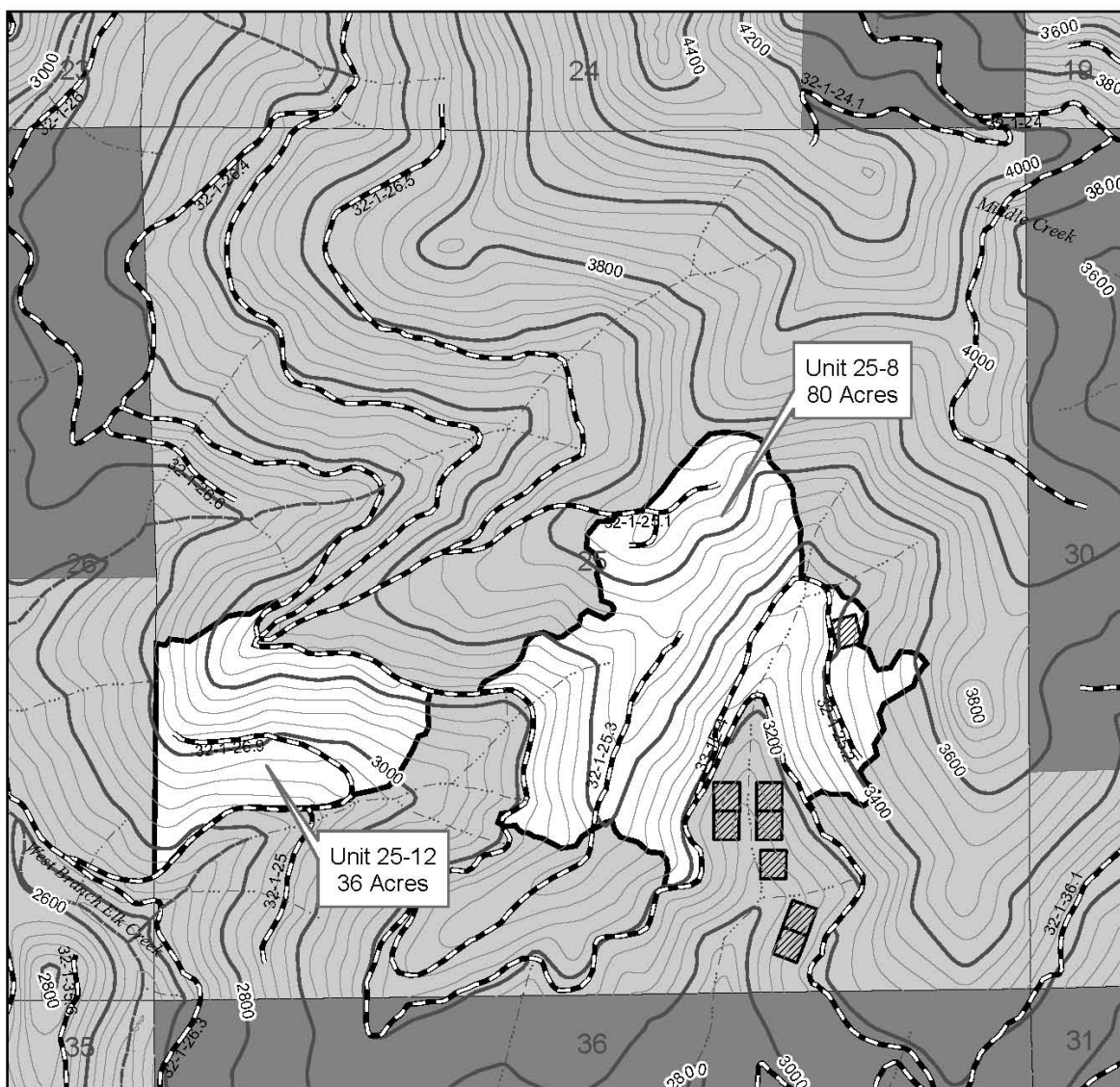


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MEDFORD DISTRICT
Butte Falls RA
April 2008



Timbered Rock Fire

T32S R1W Sec 25



FOI Key	Unit #	Acres	Bid Item	Treatment
161726	25-8	80	1-O	Brush + Hdwd Clmp Ctrl
161724	25-12	36	1-O	Brush + Hdwd Clmp Ctrl
	Total	116		



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April 2008

